

REMARKS

Claims 23-41, 43-46, and 48-55 remain in the application including independent claims 23, 41, 48, and 51. Claims 42, 47, and 56 have been cancelled. The application has been amended to overcome the examiner's drawing and specification objections and to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112.

Claims 23-36, 38, 40-46, and 48-55 stand provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-13 of U.S. Patent No. 6,276,474. A terminal disclaimer is being filed herewith to overcome the double patenting rejection. Claims 23-36, 38, 40, 42-45, and 49-55 are indicated as allowable upon resolution of the double patenting rejection. Claims 37 and 39 are also indicated as allowable.

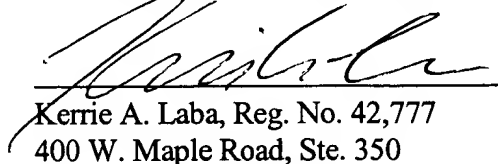
Claims 41 and 46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Travis. Claim 48 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Austin in view of Quartullo. Claim 42 has been incorporated into claim 41. Claim 48 has been amended to include first and second planetary sets that are driven by the first and second gear sets about the lateral axis of rotation. Applicant thus believes that all art rejections have been overcome and that all claims are now in condition for allowance.

Further, Applicant apologizes with regard to confusion with arguments made related to the Kawamoto reference. Applicant was simply trying to point out that the output shaft in Kawamoto is designated as 21, not 4, and that this shaft 21 is not driven directly by the ring gear hub 24 because the ring gear hub 24 of the planetary gear set 2 is held against rotation.

For the reasons set forth above, all claims should be allowed. An indication of such is requested. We enclose a check to cover the costs of additional dependent claims. If additional fees are required the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482 in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

CARLSON, GASKEY & OLDS

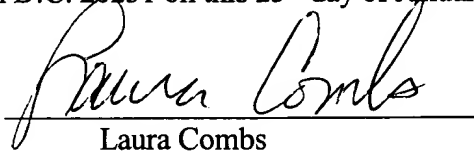


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Dated: January 23, 2002

CERTIFICATE OF MAIL

I hereby certify that the enclosed Amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to Assistant Commissioner of Patents, Washington D.C. 20231 on this 23rd day of January, 2002.



Laura Combs

APPENDIX A
Claims

(Version With Markings to Show Changes Made)

41. (Amended) An automotive vehicle drive unit assembly comprising:
- first and second driving axle shafts being co-linear and defining a lateral axis of rotation;
- first and second wheel hubs driven by said first and second driving axle shafts respectively about said lateral axis of rotation;
- a first gear set for driving said first wheel hub;
- a second gear set for driving said second wheel hub;
- first and second planetary gear sets driven by said first and second gear sets about said lateral axis of rotation;
- a first electric motor for driving said first gear set and defining a first longitudinal axis of rotation that is transverse to said lateral axis of rotation;
- a second electric motor for driving said second gear set and defining a second longitudinal axis of rotation that is transverse to said lateral axis of rotation and spaced apart from said first longitudinal axis of rotation;
- a third electric motor in parallel driving relationship with said first electric motor to drive said first gear set; and
- a fourth electric motor in parallel driving relationship with said second electric motor to drive said second gear set wherein said first and third electric motors drive said first gear set and said second and fourth electric motors drive said second gear set independently from each other.

43. (Amended) An assembly as set forth in Claim [42] 41, wherein said first gear set is housed within a first gearbox mounted to said first and third electric motors and said second gear set is housed within a second gearbox mounted to said second and fourth electric motors

48. (Amended) A vehicle comprising:

a vehicle body extending between lateral sides, passenger seats being mounted adjacent each of said lateral sides, a floor defined beneath said passenger seats, an aisle defined between said passenger seats, and said floor also extending beneath said aisle;

at least one driving axle for driving a pair of laterally spaced wheels including a first drive axle shaft associated with the first of said wheels, and a second drive axle shaft associated with the second of said wheels, said first and second drive axle shafts defining [an] a lateral axis of rotation;

a first and second gear set for driving said first and second wheels;

a first and second planetary gear set driven by said first and second gear sets about said lateral axis of rotation;

a first electric motor mounted at a non-parallel angle relative to said axis of rotation of said first drive axle shaft for driving said first gear set, and a second electric motor mounted at a non-parallel angle relative to said axis of rotation of said second drive axle shaft and operatively connected to drive said second gear set; and

said electric motors being mounted adjacent to said wheels at a vertical position which is higher than a vertical position of the floor of said aisle.

50. (Amended) A vehicle as set forth in Claim 49, [including a] wherein said first planetary gear set is driven by said first and third electric motors via said first gear set for speed reduction at said first wheel and [a] said second planetary gear set is driven by said second and fourth electric motors via said second gear set for speed reduction at said second wheel.